[fic] When I Close My Eyes

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Title: When I Close My Eyes.
Fandom: Supernatural.
Rating: PG-13.
Warnings: None, really. Nothing worse than the show itself, at least.
Pairings/Characters: Nick/Lucifer.
Word Count: 1,733 words.
Summary: Nick keeps waking up and Lucifer's still there - and asking to be let back in.
Note: Written for the Kink Bingo. Here's my card. The prompt I used was begging. I wasn't able to make this as erotic as I was hoping to, but I think it'll satisfy the prompt.

This is set in an AU that's post S6. Set in the same universe as this fic, but you don't have to read that one to get this one. If you get what I mean. Either way, please enjoy!

Also, thanks to **synnerxx** for wordwars and the initial pairing inspiration, and to **ravenspear** for reassuring me that it can be a kink bingo fill without the smut.

"Go away," Nick whispers to the image, raising a shaking hand to his forehead, feeling faint scars. The only physical reminder of his time as a vessel, and it's exactly as it should be. It's not bleeding, it's not open, it doesn't feel like something too hot is in the slow-motion process of bursting out of him.

But: his image in the mirror is smirking, and the scars under its fingers are open sores. Unhealed. Nick averts his eyes from the sight and tastes blood in his mouth.

It's been a bad night. Nightmares, waking up screaming, the works. Nick lowers his hands to the sink and knows it's going to be a bad morning as well.

He can handle a bad morning, however. He wishes he weren't, but he's used to this kind of thing. He knows how to handle it.

"Good morning, Nick," his reflection says, and Nick startles, raising his eyes back to the mirror. His mirror-image has his arms crossed and looks lazily confident. There's blood on his mouth.

"No," Nick says, and reaches for a towel to cover the mirror with. "Go away."

"It's too late for that. You let me in, remember?"

Nick changes his mind and wraps his fist in the towel before punching the mirror. It hurts as much as he thought it would.

There's faint laughter from the shards of glass on the floor, and Nick walks out of the bathroom.

There's a hand on the back of his neck and someone whispering in his ear.

"Why won't you leave me alone?" Nick whispers back. "That's over. You're gone."

"I'm back, and I need you."

Nick shakes his head and tries to pay attention to his book. He sneaks a glance at the telephone, but no. No. He can get through this. He can survive hallucinations, and even if it is - he cuts that thought off. It isn't Lucifer. It's a hallucination, just another after-effect of being dead and worse. More of his guilt complex talking to him and trying to ruin his life.

The hand on his neck slides forward and down over his chest.

"Go away," Nick breathes. "Go away and leave me alone. You're not going to get anything from me."

He's talking to his hallucinations, and that's not good. Nick closes his book and stands up, but the hand stays put. When he looks down there's empty air, just the feeling of a hand over his chest and stomach.

"I'm talking to my shirt," Nick mutters.

"I'm not a shirt," Lucifer says, and Nick jerks his head as he feels teeth bite into his earlobe. "Nick, stop trying to be rational. The universe is not so kind as that, and rules are made to be broken."

"You're not really here."

"Correct! I'm waiting for you to let me in, Nick."

Nick swats at his ear, then walks for the phone. That's it. He's not going to argue with his subconscious. He's going to call Reginald and ask if he minds someone crashing on his couch.

"Ah ah ah, Nick. No." A hand closes around his wrist, and oh, god. He can't move his arm, and the grip is iron. "This is a private conversation. I don't want

interruptions."

"You can't have me," Nick says, voice shaking. "Go away, please."

"You'll change your mind, won't you?"

Nick curls his fingers, clenches them into a fist. He tugs at the iron grip on his wrist. He thinks: *I'm stronger than he is*, and *Not making the same mistake twice.* An image of Sarah flashes through his mind, and he closes his eyes briefly, pushing back the wave of guilt.

"It was the best decision you could have made, Nick," Lucifer says.

Nick lunges for the phone, and everything goes white.

He wakes up. He uses the bathroom. He's at home.

He stops at the mirror. It's in perfect condition, intact - but his knuckles are bruised from punching it, and this can't be right.

His first instinct is to pinch himself, so he does.

The lance of pain, and - the mirror's frame is empty but for a few jagged pieces. The trashcan holds the rest of the shards and the towel he used.

But his knuckles don't hurt anyone, and the bruises are gone.

"Quit playing with me," Nick mutters, and rubs his eyes. He's dreaming, or thinks he is, and whatever the sick plan Lucifer has, the end result is the same: he can't afford to say yes.

There's laughter from the mirrors, laughter that sounds like his own, and Nick covers his ears before bolting from the room.

He *can* afford to be scared, after all.

There's a body lying on him when he wakes up. Nick breathes in sharply and holds still, keeping his eyes shut. His lips move in silent prayer until he is interrupted by the touch of familiar fingers dipping into his mouth.

He bites down, and opens his eyes to see a mirror image of himself.

Except: the scars on his forehead are open; bleeding. And that is Lucifer looking out from his eyes.

The fingers withdraw from his mouth as Lucifer gives a dry chuckle.

"Fuck you," Nick says.

"Do you want me to beg?" Lucifer asks with a smirk.

"Actually? I'd like that. But the answer's still no."

If it's a dream it can't hurt too much to taunt the Devil, just as long as the word 'yes' never crosses his lips.

Lucifer draws back, and Nick sits up. The problem is, Nick knows that expression; he's worn it before: it's what he looks like when he's thinking about an important decision.

"I need you, Nick," Lucifer says. "This is something you need to understand. If I am free, then Michael is as well, and - "

"You can't have me." Nick repeats. "Besides, you were after that other guy. The one who didn't need to drink blood to hold you. Go bother him."

"There's a problem with that."

"If it's because he'll say no - "

"Nick," Lucifer says. "Shut up. Thank you. Sam Winchester is unavailable as he is without a soul for the time being, and a soulless being can not be host to an angel, let alone an archangel. Otherwise I would ride a construct, and bypass you altogether."

"I don't care."

"You do care, Nick. That's why I'm still here. I need your consent."

"You're not getting it," Nick says. "Letting you in was the worst mistake of my life."

"No, it wasn't."

Nick jerks his head up. How on *earth* could Lucifer justify that statement? Even now Nick had nightmares on a nightly basis, had problems with anything cold, not to mention *everything else* he had trouble with. Grief, anger, despair -

"Do you know why your family died, Nick?"

Nick goes still.

"I needed you then. You would never have told me yes if you had a family to come home to."

"You - "

"I told him who, when, where, how." Lucifer says softly. "I wouldn't have needed to if you would have been able to say yes without that grief driving you."

What can he say? What can he *do*? Lucifer doesn't need to lie, not when the truth hurts more.

"Do I need to arrange for more despair in your life, Nick? Do I need to cause more bloodshed to earn your consent?"

Nick scrambles back, falling on the bed. He can't go back, he can't do this again, and he can't put the others at risk.

Lucifer moves onto the bed, straddling him, cupping his cheeks in his too-cold hands. Nick stares up into a face that resembles his own but with Lucifer behind the eyes.

"Do I need to beg, Nick?" Lucifer asks softly. "I need you to say yes, and I will not hesitate from dirtying my hands yet again."

Nick tells himself to wake up, to get out of this dream; he's frozen under Lucifer's hold, he can feel the chill radiating from the hands on his face.

Lucifer leans closer, lips brushing against Nick's as he whispers "Please, Nick, let me in."

"No," Nick whispers, jerking back.

Lucifer breathes in, and for a moment Nick can see what's under the skin - cold light, anger visible and bearing down on them both, Lucifer's desperation showing through that.

Then Lucifer bows his head and the light is gone, and he looks human again.

"I'll ask once more," Lucifer says. "Tell me yes and I will not need to follow up on my threats, and I will give you what you deserve after loyal service. Tell me now, and...well, I'll leave that up to your imagination." His smile is full of teeth for a moment, and then he gets off the bed. "Choose wisely, Nick."

And Lucifer kneels. Gets on his knees, puts his head down. Nick sits up to stare, because that's something he *knows* Lucifer has in spades: pride. He would never lower his head, never to a human, never -

"Nick, please let me in."

It's a single moment of horrifying clarity: he says yes, he ruins everything *again*. He says no, Lucifer ruins *him* and those around him. And now this, as saying no, when Lucifer is giving up his pride to ask this -

Nick's shaking when he whispers "No."

Lucifer raises his head, and whatever he says is drowned out by the noise, the white light, the terrible noise of angels -

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Nick's shaking when he wakes up.

He holds still for a moment, afraid it's another dream, but eventually he sits up, and starts - there's someone by the window.

It's not Lucifer, but he's tense either way.

The figure by the window turns, and it takes a moment for him to recognize and remember who it is. It's not hard, once he places the trenchcoat.

A name Lucifer's said with his lips: "Castiel?"

"You passed."

"What?"

"Lucifer remains in his Cage. You passed this test, and I am to leave the vessels alone. The terms of the agreement between He and I were clear." Castiel licks his lips, and pauses. Something in the way he holds himself is too familiar. "You are stronger than you look."

Nick opens his mouth to say something, anything -

But Castiel is gone, and he is alone and awake.